



News Release

For Immediate Release:

Friday, November 7, 2003

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Primary Care Network Reaching Capacity - Utahns Encouraged to Get Covered at Work

(Salt Lake City, UT) - The Primary Care Network (PCN), Utah's main public insurance program for income eligible adults, is reaching enrollment capacity. Beginning November 14, 2003, PCN applications will only be accepted during designated enrollment periods to be scheduled and announced as slots become available. Covered at Work, a related program designed to help Utah adults who can't afford their employer-sponsored health insurance, is still accepting applications.

"Though PCN has reached capacity, workers should apply for Covered at Work if they think they may be eligible. This program is designed for working Utahns who need assistance in paying their part of the premium for the health insurance available through their work," says Michael Hales, Director, PCN and Covered at Work.

Funding is available to support the enrollment of 19,000 people on PCN. Based on current caseload growth, the Utah Department of Health (UDOH) projects that PCN will have reached this number by November 14. The UDOH will announce periodic enrollment sessions when new PCN applications will again be accepted. Those currently enrolled on PCN will be able to renew their enrollment annually as it comes due. PCN provides primary health care benefits for Utah adults who qualify based on age and income.

Covered at Work, a component of PCN, is an insurance premium reimbursement program for adults who qualify. Employer, employee, state, and federal funds are combined to purchase private health insurance. Funding is available to support the enrollment of 6,000 Utahns on Covered at Work. Adults who have access to health insurance at work, but pay greater than five percent of their income, may qualify.

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In addition, those aged 19-64, are U.S. citizens or legal residents, and those meeting income guidelines may qualify. For instance, a single person who earns \$1,123.00 per month or \$7.02 an hour would meet the income guidelines.

Applications are currently being accepted for Covered at Work. You may apply online at www.health.utah.gov/pcn or call the UDOH Health Resource Line at 1-888-222-2542 and ask for an application or directions to the nearest eligibility office. Though applications for PCN will not be accepted after November 14, the same paper and online form may be used to apply for Covered At Work.

To apply for Covered at Work an applicant should:

1. Find out when open enrollment will be held for their employer-sponsored health insurance;
2. About 30 days (or as soon as you can) before open enrollment, apply for Covered at Work; and
3. After being notified that they are eligible for Covered at Work, apply for health insurance through your employer.

The UDOH encourages Utahns to apply for Covered at Work prior to their private health insurance open enrollments. Employees are only allowed to sign up for their insurance at certain times, as new hires, often after a waiting period, and during an annual open enrollment. The timing of open enrollments varies by business. Human Resource directors and insurance agents are good sources of information about when open enrollments are held.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.